

County of Placer Board of Supervisors

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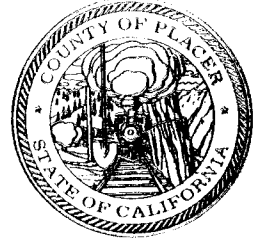
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District 2

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District 3

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District 4

BRUCE KRANZ
District 5



January 10, 2006

The Honorable Greg Walden
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support H.R. 4200 – the "Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act"

Dear Representative Walden,

Today, the Placer County Board of Supervisors voted to support H.R. 4200, the "Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act" you introduced in November 2005. This legislation is important to Placer County in that it provides for the rapid assessment of damage, quick action, and flexible funding following catastrophic events. These timely actions are required in order to restore landscapes, prevent additional reforestation backlog, and recover damaged, but still merchantable, material before it loses economic value.

As you may know, the 2001 Gap Fire in the Tahoe National Forest occurred in Placer County. Approximately 2,462 acres were burned, of which 1,370 acres involved public property. The subsequent delay in harvesting of usable timber and the extreme drought after the fire significantly reduced the value of reclaimed lumber on these public lands. By contrast, timber on private lands were generally harvested within two months of the fire, allowing for over 147,000 seedlings to be planted starting the very next season.

It is estimated that \$1.35 million in value was lost on public lands. This loss in value, if retained through authority authorized in the "Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act" would have covered the cost of watershed restoration, resource enhancement and hazardous fuel removal on public land at the Gap Fire site.

Timely action and well-planned restoration activities after a catastrophic wildfire can benefit the environment, the economy, and communities by reducing the effects of soil erosion, water degradation, pest infestation, noxious weed invasion, and the loss of wildlife habitat. The permitting of timely salvage logging, allows in many cases, the restoration to pay for itself.

On behalf of Placer County, we thank you for introducing this important legislation that has strong bipartisan support and more than 140 cosponsors.

Sincerely,


Chairman, Placer County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Representative John Doolittle
Representative Richard Pombo
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer